

### 5. NEVER POUR ANYTHING-DOWN STORM DRAINS.

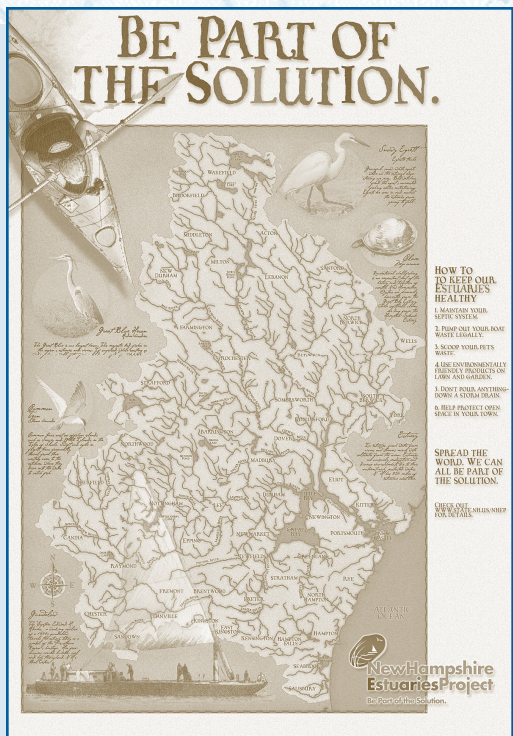
Storm drains are designed to funnel excess rain runoff directly into rivers and streams. Never dump substances such as motor oil, paint, hazardous waste or any other pollutants down storm drains or even on the ground. Find ways to recycle used motor oil and paint. Check with your town to see if oil can be recycled at the Public Works Department or find a local auto shop that recycles oil. Give leftover paint to schools or community groups in need of paint for projects. Dispose of household chemicals at your town's hazardous waste collection days. Remember, anything you put in a storm drain flows directly into your local lake, pond, stream, river or estuary.

### 6. HELP PROTECT OPEN SPACE IN YOUR TOWN.

Maintaining natural buffer zones around waterways and conserving undeveloped land are important ways to ensure long-term water quality and quantity for the region. Vegetated buffer zones (areas that conserve natural growth around water's edge) effectively prevent soil erosion and filter pollutants from waterways. Undeveloped land provides habitat for plants, insects and animals that are part of a healthy ecosystem. Excess development increases the amount of paved surfaces (such as roads, roofs, parking lots), which increases runoff, erosion and pollution levels.



Get involved with your local land trust or conservation commission to learn how to protect land through conservation and "Smart Growth" development practices. Work with residents in your town and watershed to keep water supplies plentiful and clean through land conservation. Within your own property, maintain or plant native vegetation around any ponds, streams or wetlands to create healthy buffer areas.

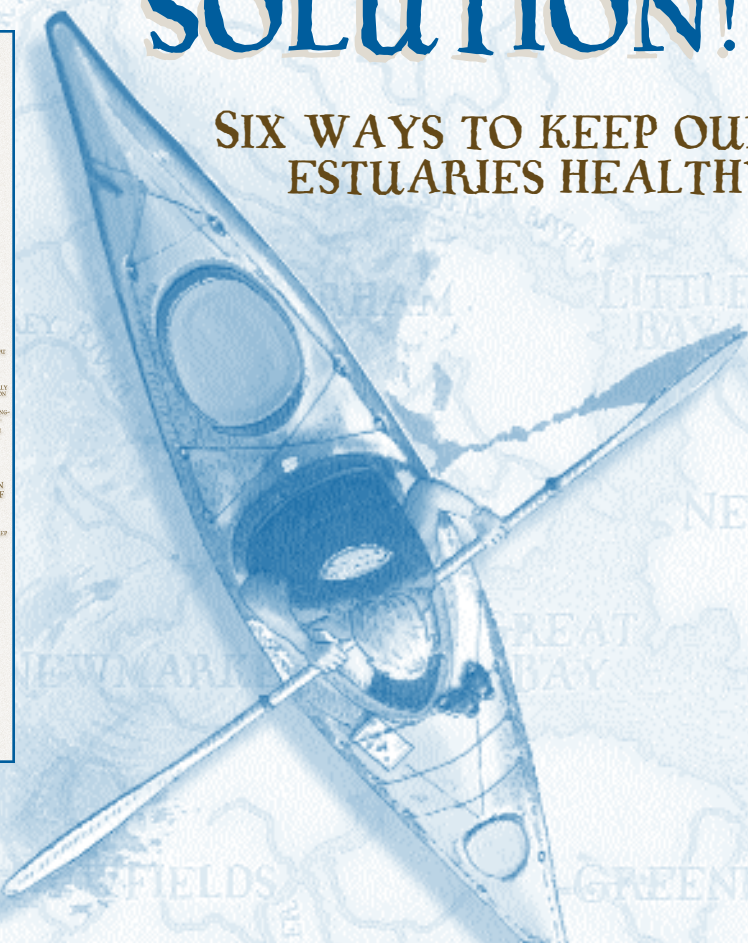


If you're part of the solution, you're eligible for a free 27" x 40" full color map of the New Hampshire coastal watershed, suitable for framing.

Call the New Hampshire Estuaries Project at 603/433-7187, or stop by our office at 152 Court Street in Portsmouth. Supplies are limited.

# YOU CAN BE PART OF THE SOLUTION!

## SIX WAYS TO KEEP OUR ESTUARIES HEALTHY

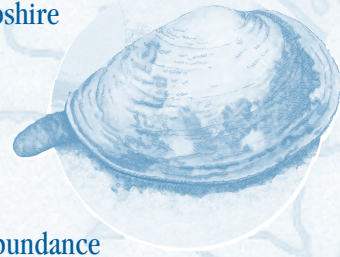


## New Hampshire Estuaries Project

Be Part of the Solution.

# IT'S IMPORTANT TO ALL OF US

Anyone who walks, boats, fishes or clams in coastal New Hampshire can easily understand the importance of keeping our waterways clean. Pollution directly affects the health of our rivers, streams and estuaries. It reduces the abundance of wildlife and sea creatures and makes the water unsafe for swimming and clams unsafe for eating. Much pollution occurs as rainwater runoff moves over land, picking up contaminants like bacteria, nutrients and toxic chemicals from our yards, parking lots and roadways. This polluted runoff is deposited into our waterways.



Estuaries, which are the biologically diverse areas where freshwater from rivers and streams mix with saltwater from the ocean, are particularly sensitive to pollutants from throughout the entire watershed. The coastal watershed includes many inland rivers such as the Salmon Falls, Cocheco, Bellamy, Oyster, Lamprey, Piscassic and Exeter Rivers, among many others, which drain into the Piscataqua River, Great Bay or Hampton/Seabrook Harbor.

At right are a few easy things you can do to help keep our estuaries healthy. After all, we all have a role in protecting our estuaries – one of New Hampshire's most precious resources. Through simple actions, we all can be part of the solution and make sure that estuaries will always be important environmental, economic, recreational and cultural resources.

## 1. MAINTAIN YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM.

Improperly functioning and overloaded septic systems are major sources of water pollution. Failing septic systems leak harmful pollutants, like bacteria and excess nutrients, into groundwater. From there, pollutants make their way into our lakes, streams and estuaries.

To help prevent this, have your system inspected annually to make sure it's in good working order. Pump your system every one to three years. Check the phone book under "Septic Systems" to find a local firm who will regularly maintain your system. Avoid putting waste down the drain or toilet that septic systems can't handle – grease, food, household chemicals and trash. Replace old systems and those that need to be upgraded to support year-round capacity.

## 2. PUMP OUT YOUR BOAT WASTE - LEGALLY.

Waste from boat toilets dumped directly into waterways contributes harmful bacteria that can close swimming beaches and shellfish harvesting areas.

Prevent pollution by having your tank pumped at pump-out facilities. Or call 603/436-0915 to schedule a floating pump-out from the NH Department of



Environmental Services mobile pump-out boat. Remember: Discharging waste directly overboard is harmful to people and the environment. And it's illegal.



## 3. SCOOP YOUR PET'S WASTE.

Pet waste contains pathogens that contaminate water and endanger human health. When it rains, pet waste gets washed from land and storm drains into our waterways, where it creates high bacteria levels that can close public beaches and shellfish harvesting areas. To prevent this, dispose of your pet's waste by flushing it down the toilet. In some Seacoast towns you can be fined if you don't clean up your pet's waste.

## 4. USE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRACTICES AND PRODUCTS IN YOUR YARD.

Over-fertilizing your lawn and garden can wash nutrients into our waterways. These excess nutrients cause groundwater contamination and algal blooms, making oxygen levels insufficient to support aquatic life. Pesticides are also harmful to aquatic life and can contaminate drinking water supplies. Never dispose of leaves and grass clippings in streams or rivers. To find out more about sound landscaping alternatives, contact your local conservation district or cooperative extension office.